

## Washington Learns

### Transfer Issues: Universities and Community and Technical Colleges

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#### Baccalaureate Capacity

**Baccalaureate Capacity Study.** In Fall 2004 the Council of Presidents and the community and technical college system undertook a joint study to evaluate higher education's capacity to meet the growing demand for baccalaureate access.

- Baccalaureate degrees a shared mission between the two sectors. More than 40% of bachelor's graduates were community and technical college transfer students.
- Public universities award three out of four bachelor's degrees.

#### Findings:

- 18,600 baccalaureate demand by 2010 based on population growth, low regional access and programmatic need for technical degree transfer.
- Meeting the demand requires growth in all pathways to the baccalaureate: public and private universities, transfer, university branch campuses, university centers, and community and technical colleges. More than three-fourths of projected 2010 demand can be met if enrollment plans are funded.
- There is strong demand for upper division access. Because transfer students are more placebound than freshmen, local community options are needed and feasible. University center partnerships and targeted bachelors degrees offered by community and technical colleges can help meet that demand.
- Transfer students provide greater diversity among bachelor's degree earners.

#### Recent legislative action (2005-07 operating budget, HB1794):

- Enrollment growth provided to all sectors.
- Expansion of university branch campuses.
- Restructuring the North Snohomish Island Skagit County Consortium to a university center model.
- Authorizing university contract pilots at three community and technical colleges
- Authorizing applied bachelor's degree pilots at four community and technical colleges

**Proportionality Agreement.** Greater demand for baccalaureate access than available space at universities created competition for admission between freshmen and transfer students.

- Public universities, community and technical colleges and HECB developed an agreement that reserved a certain portion of new admissions slots for transfer students each year, so that the number of transfer students admitted increased proportionally with enrollment growth at the universities.
- A new proportionality agreement has been developed for UW Tacoma, and additional agreements are underway for UW Bothell, WSU Vancouver and WSU TriCities.



### **Smoothing the Transfer Pathway**

Public and private universities, community and technical colleges, and the Higher Education Coordinating Board formed the Joint Access and Oversight Group to develop and implement strategies for addressing inefficiencies in transfer between community and technical colleges and baccalaureate institutions.

**Major Ready Pathways.** In some university majors with specific lower division prerequisites, students who transfer are graduating with more credits than students who start as freshmen.

- Recent state legislation promoted the expansion of major ready transfer degrees.
- Transfer degrees are being designed by joint work groups of faculty and academic administrators from universities and community and technical colleges, to provide specific lower division roadmaps for transfer students pursuing those majors. These work groups identify common prerequisites across institutions.
- Majors with significant credit differentials for transfer students, popular among transfer students, or in demand occupations were prioritized.
- To date transfer degrees have been completed in science, nursing, and secondary science education and math education. Work is underway in business, engineering, engineering technology and elementary education.

**90 Credit Limits.** The long standing Direct Transfer Agreement, which spells out the composition of transfer associate degrees, and HECB policy effectively limited transfer students to 90 credits from a community or technical college.

- Agreement that associate degrees can exceed 90 credits if lower division preparation for majors requires more than 90 credits.
- Remove differences in transfer of lower division credit between 2-year and 4-year institutions. Each public baccalaureate institution has approved a policy that treats the number of lower division transfer credits allowed in the same manner for 4-year and 2-year transfers.
- Remove 90 credit requirement at baccalaureate institutions. To accomplish these initiatives, transfer policy was changed by the HECB at the request of both higher education sectors, deleting the requirement that transfer students complete at least 90 credits at a baccalaureate institution in order to earn a bachelor's degree.

**Academic electives.** To improve consistency among institutions, a voluntary agreement has been developed on what constitutes an elective in transfer degrees and a process to gain statewide agreement regarding review of courses not historically or uniformly treated as electives.

- New policy approved by public and private institutions.
- Community and technical colleges assign responsibility to academic transfer council to recommend courses.

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